

**APHIS DIRECTIVE 4591.2**  
**7/20/93**

**UNIFORM ALLOWANCE AND WEARING GUIDELINES**

1. PURPOSE

This Directive covers uniforms, uniform allowances, and wearing guidelines applicable to APHIS employees, under the Federal Employees Uniform Allowance Act.

2. REPLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This Directive replaces APHIS Directive 466.5, dated 8/2/90.

3. AUTHORITY

The Federal Employees Uniform Allowance Act (5 U.S.C. 5901-5902, as amended by Public Law.)

4. POLICY

It is APHIS policy to pay allowances to employees for acquiring or replacing uniforms if the employees are required to wear a prescribed uniform to perform their official duties. Expenses for laundering, dry cleaning, and repairing the uniforms must be borne by employees. Allowances will be paid directly to the approved contractor for orders placed by the employees.

5. COVERAGE

This Directive covers all employees of APHIS who are required to wear uniforms except for foreign nationals employed outside the United States.

6. EMPLOYEES REQUIRED TO WEAR UNIFORMS

a. Employees required to wear uniforms to perform their official duties are:

(1) Full-time permanent APHIS employees involved in import/export inspections and, on a case-by-case basis, plant pest programs.

(2) Employees not in the full-time permanent category who management determines need to be identified via a uniform because they are in contact with the public.

- (3) Employees who are not required to wear a uniform at their permanent duty station but are required to wear a uniform at an emergency program project. Emergency programs will be responsible for authorizing and budgeting the Uniform Allowance Authorization for these employees.
- b. Employees required to wear uniforms may be divided into three groups for the purpose of allowance entitlements:
  - (1) Group I. These are permanent full-time employees who spend 50 percent or more of their time in import and export activities.
  - (2) Group II. These are permanent full-time employees who spend less than 50 percent of their time in import and export activities.
  - (3) Group III. These are other than full-time employees who perform import and export activities.
- c. Employees not required to wear a uniform but who request authorization will be placed in the uniform system. All purchases will be out of pocket. The Uniform Allowance Authorization will indicate a zero dollar amount.

## 7. UNIFORM ALLOWANCE ENTITLEMENT

- a. Group I. These employees are entitled to the full initial and annual replacement allowances.
- b. Group II. These employees are entitled to the full initial and one-half the annual replacement allowance.
- c. Group III. The following computation will be used to determine the initial and annual replacement allowances:

On an annual average per pay period:

Up to 40 hours - 1/2 allowance  
41 to 60 hours - 3/4 allowance  
61 to 80 hours - full allowance

Pay Periods Worked X Hours Per Pay Periods - 26 =  
Annual Average Hours Per Pay Period.

## 8. ALLOWANCE PAYMENTS

- a. Authorization. Officers in Charge (OIC) or the designated subordinate supervisor will be responsible for approving Uniform Allowance Authorizations (UAA). UAA's are used to submit employee information and allowance amounts to the contractor to establish or change employee accounts. If an employee entitlement changes or stops at any time, an updated UAA must be sent to the contractor by the OIC or designee.
- b. Limitations.
  - (1) No uniform allowance may be paid unless it is provided for in the current Appropriation Act.
  - (2) No allowance may exceed the current maximum initial allowance or the current maximum replacement allowance in subsequent years.
  - (3) Employees may not carry over an unobligated allowance balance from one fiscal year to the next.
  - (4) An employee becomes eligible for a uniform allowance when it becomes known the employee will be required to wear the uniform.
  - (5) An employee is entitled to the full initial allowance even if he/she becomes eligible with less than a full fiscal year remaining.
  - (6) Initial and replacement allowance amounts will be announced through an annual bulletin.
- c. Uniform Year. The annual uniform allowance period begins with the Fiscal Year (October 1) or the date an employee first becomes eligible for a uniform allowance and ends with the Fiscal Year (September 30).
- d. Nonpay Status. For each period of 90 continuous calendar days in a nonpay status, the employee's replacement allowance will be discontinued for the next full fiscal quarter.

## 9. REFUNDING ALLOWANCES

- a. Initial Allowances. No employee will be asked to refund any portion of a properly made advanced payment for the initial year of uniform service.
- b. Replacement Allowances. The allowance is allotted

annually in advance and may be spent in portions or all at once, any time during the year. Only refunds will be figured on a quarterly basis. When the entire uniform allowance is allotted in advance and the employee ceases to be entitled to a uniform allowance, a refund will be required if there are whole remaining quarters in the fiscal year. Entitlement ceases upon resignation, retirement, transfer to another department, reassignment to a position that does not require a uniform and other similar separations. The employees will be asked to refund the difference between the appropriate allowance entitlement and actual amount spent. APHIS will recover the difference by salary deductions or deduction from other funds due the employee.

#### 10. REVIEWS AND REPORTS

- a. In accordance with the National Basic Agreement between the National Association of Agricultural Employees and Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ), a standing uniform committee will consider and make recommendations for changes concerning the uniform, uniform allowances, and the uniform directive. The committee will meet on an annual basis if necessary. The National Association of PPQ Managers will be represented on this committee.
- b. The uniform committee will review uniform allowances annually and make recommendations to management. This review determines the adequacy of allowances based on actual operating experience.

#### 11. UNIFORM GUIDELINES

- a. Uniforms are divided into three classes:
  - (1) Class "A." This uniform consists of black slacks and a white shirt. This type of uniform will be worn for passenger clearance at airports and seaports. This uniform may be worn for any PPQ function.
  - (2) Class "B." This uniform consists of khaki slacks and a khaki shirt. This type of uniform may be worn for rail car inspections, cargo and crew clearance, cargo ships, and boarding aircraft.
  - (3) Class "C." This uniform consists of khaki coveralls. This type of uniform may be worn for rail car and cargo clearance or activities not in direct contact with the public.
- b. Border ports may negotiate on a port-by-port basis to

wear the Class "A" or the Class "B" uniform for vehicle inspection and pedestrian coverage.

- c. Seaports must develop a port policy for those situations that do not meet the strict passenger or cargo ship definition.
- d. Wearing guidelines for the Class "A," Class "B," and Class "C" uniforms are found in Attachment 1. The items listed as (C) in Attachment 1 may be purchased outside the approved contracted source but must meet the wearing guidelines in Attachment 2 and will not be reimbursed when purchased outside the approved source.

Acting Administrator

2 Attachments

### ADDITIONAL UNIFORM WEARING GUIDELINES

- A. The items listed below may be purchased outside the approved source, but must meet the following guidelines and will not be reimbursed:
1. Socks may be black, white, or tan.
  2. Gloves must be black plain design of any suitable material.
  3. Belts must be made of black leather in 1-1/4 inch width with a plain prong silver buckle that will not exceed the width of the belt by more than 1/2 inch.
  4. Black baseball style caps, cloth or mesh, with embroidered USDA shield patch on crown.
  5. Black pullover style ski caps.
  6. Shoes purchased outside the source may be boots, pumps, fitness shoes, oxfords, loafers, or flats, but they must conform to the following:
    - a. closed heels and toes
    - b. no logos
    - c. plain black leather
    - d. maximum heel height 2 inches
    - e. no rodeo heels on boots
    - f. fitness shoes may have high or low tops

For additional guidance, review approved contractor uniform shoe styles.

7. Hosiery must be plain, neutral, or black colors, with no patterns.
- B. Conformance guidelines. These guidelines will be adhered to when wearing the uniform:
1. Shirt hem length may vary 2 inches above and below the knee.
  2. Low top shoes will be worn with the skirts.
  3. The USDA patch will go on the left sleeve (except blazers). K-9 patches will go on the right sleeve.
  4. Ties and/or blazers are not mandatory with the uniform. Ties and/or blazers may be worn with long or short sleeve shirts.

5. Shirts, except maternity, will be tucked in.
6. Shirts without ties will have only the collar button unbuttoned.
7. Long sleeves will have cuffs buttoned.
8. Uniforms must be neat, clean, and in good repair at the start of the tour of duty.

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